Embryonic Stem Cell Research

3218. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that US President George Bush had taken the view on 9th August, 2001 that embryonic Stem Cell Research is the leading edge of a series of moral hazards and he would be banning federal funding for the research; and

(b) what is the position of Government of India on this question?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir. On Aug. 9,2001, in the first major speech of his presidency, Mr. Bush announced that he would permit taxpayer financing so long as the studies invovled only those stem-cell lines already in existence at that time. The President said he did not want to encourage the destruction of any more embroys.The President's spokeperson Mr. Duffy had clarified that a fundamental moral line should not be crossed by encouraging the destruction of human.

(b) In India, embryonic stem cell research is being carried out as per the existing policy that stem cell research should be promoted in view of its potential for clinical use. For embryonic stem cell research, embroys should not be generated for the sole purpose of obtaining stem cells. Only surplus, spare or supernumerary embroys can be used after obtaining informed consent of both spouses. Such collection of embryos should be done only from registered Assisted Reproductive Technique (ART) clinics.

Development of Mumbai and Pune as Bio-Tech Hubs

3219. SHRI SANJAY RAUT:
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:
SHRI VASANT CHAVAN:
SHRI DATTAMEGHE:
SHRI VIJAY J.DARDA:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are plans to develop Mumbai and Pune in Maharashtra as Bio-tech Hub;

(b) if so, the details thereof and cost of the plan; and

(c) the steps taken and progress made in implementing the plan so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) The Central Government has neither received any proposal nor is aware of any plan to develop Pune and Mumbai as Biotech hub cities.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Tax holiday for drug research and development

3220. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to grant a ten year tax holiday to pharmaceutical companies engaged in research and development activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether pharmaceutical companies doing research and development activities already enjoy huge tax exemption under the existing law and if so, the details therof;

(d) the amount spent by five top pharmaceutical firms on Research and Development activities during last three years, year-wise and firm-•wise; and

(e) the details of medical research done during the period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) Under Section 80IB (Subsection 8A) of Income Tax Act, a ten years tax holiday is already being allowed to companies, including pharmaceutical companies, that are engaged in scientific research and development activities, provided the companies are approved by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research after 31st March, 2000 and up to 1st April, 2007.